RE. POSTAL STRIKE

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI (Tamil Nadu): Madam Deputy Chairman, thank you for giving me this opportunity to raise an important issue. Madam, the whole House, as you know, is concerned about the Postal strike that is going on for the last three years. Today is the fourth day. It is not a wild cat strike. Actually, the charter of demands was submitted eight months before. Had the Government acted promptly, the circumstances would not have led to this situation. I am told, Madam, that the labour union leaders had talks with the Chief Labour Commissioner as well as the Minister yesterday evening. The Minister actually had talks with the labour union leaders yesterday evening in camera. But to the press, he has given some different statement. Madam, I quote only one sentence: "The imposition of the Essential Services Maintenance Act was also one of the possibilities that the Government might consider." Madam, two days before that, they said, no work, no pay, as if they found it newly. If the same yardstick is applied to the Ministers also during the last by-elections, many of them would not get any salary because they say, no work, no pay. Now they want to impose...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Pondicherry): Ministers and also the Members of Parliament.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Madam, I do not want to reproduce the demands that they have already submitted to the Government. One very important issue is the extension of legal benefits and normal facilities to the ED employees as it is done in the case of other employees. Then, they are demanding Rs. 100 as interim relief. The Government has accepted that right from officers to class-4 employees. Why should they not give it to the ED employees also? Then, regarding their employment, now the Government of India has fixed their qualification for postman as 10th standard instead of 8th standard. Madam, when they fix the qualification as 10th standard, automatically it attracts the LDC scale. They are demanding the LDC scale. Then as regards OTA, if they work on the holiday, they are giving only a flat rate of OTA. They must give OTA on the hourly basis. Based on the scientific approach, they already accepted the principle of giving OTA on an hourly basis for other employees. But only for the Postal employees, they said that they will give only flat rates. This is one important issue.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Don't make a speech. Be brief.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Most of the issues on which an agreement was reached during the July, 1987 agitation are still pending. They have not been implemented. Actually, the Postal employees demanded of the Government to see that all the pending issues are implemented immediately. For these reasons, they are fighting. Had the Government actually agreed with these just demands, this strike would not have taken place. There is one more important issue. On the 21st of this month, the telecom employees are also going to join the strike. Already, the people are suffering. If the telecom employees are also going to join the strike, the whole country would be paralysed. Such a situation should not arise. That is why I would appeal, through you, Madam, to the hon. Minister. Instead of threatening and intimidating the postal employees, he must come forward. He must hold talks with the postal employees and see that an amicable settlement is reached. Thank you.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Madam, I would take just half-a-minute. The demands of the postal employees, particularly, that of the E.D. employees, are genuine. They get Rs. 200-Rs. 300 per month. They do the regular work as the other postal employees. It is a very genuine demand which should be considered by the Government, apart from the other demands.

[Shri V. Narayanasamy]

Madam, there is also the question of promotions for the postal employees. They have not got promotions for years together. They are working in very difficult climatic conditions. They are working in dangerous places also. Not only they do not get promotions, but they are also working in difficult conditions. I would, therefore, request the hon. Minister to talk to them. The matter is now before the Labour Commissioner. The Minister should call the representatives of the associations talk to them and try to settle the matter. There should be no question of any prestige on the part of the Government and the employees. This is a very essential service. Therefore, the hon. Minister should intervene and settle the issue amicably in the interest of the nation.

SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL (Bihar): Madam, I wish to draw the attention of the House to two photographs which appeared in the 'Indian Express' of yesterday and today regarding the meeting of the two Hinduja brothers with the Prime Minister. I have a great respect for the Prime Minister. I do not want to denigate him in any way. But I feel concerned on two counts. One is, these gentlemen who had gone to the Prime Minister's house and got their vehicle inaugurated at the Prime Minister's house itself are the ones whose names have been mentioned in the Bofors case. I do not want to go into the details of the Bofors case itself. But I do hope the Prime Minister realises that association of such people with the lofty name of the Prime Minister does not help in carrying further the investigations into the Bofors case.

Secondly, I would like the Government to make a statement on two counts. The first one is whether the Prime Minister had a meeting with the Hinduja brothers and whether, in that meeting, the Prime Minister asked about the letter which Mr. Solanki had given to the Swiss authorities and whether they were responsible for handing over this letter to Mr. Solanki. I would like the Prime Minister to clarify this point. (Interruptions. Everybody cannot go to the Prime Minister's house. I do not accept that. Everybody should not go to the Prime Minister's house. Every criminal is not at liberty to go to the Prime Minister's house. The Prime Minister is the Prime Minister of the law-abiding citizens of the country and not of those who try to flout the laws of the land. Thank you.

श्री एस० एस० अहलुवालिया (बिहार) : उपसभापति महोदय, जहां तक गुजराल साहब ने जो मुद्दा उठाया है, इण्डियन एक्सप्रेस के हैड लाइन को पढ़ कर यह मुद्दा उठ गया लेकिन इनको यह भी पता होना चाहिये कि हिन्दुस्तान में एक एग्जीबीशन चल रही है ऑटोमोबाइल्ज की . . . (व्यवधान)

श्री इन्द्र कुमार गुजराल : प्राइम मिनिस्टर के घर में एग्जीबीशन नहीं चल रही है (व्यवधान)

श्री एस० एस० अहलुवालिया : आटो एक्सपो एग्जीबीशन चल रही है, जिसका उद्घाटन किया और कोई विदेशी गाड़ी का नहीं किया। अशोका ले-लैंड एक हिन्दुस्तानी गाड़ी है, उसका उद्घाटन किया। इसमें भी एतराज है इनको। कहां से अशोका ले-लैंड चल रही है, यह भी पूछे बिना कि अशोका ले-लैंड को फाइनेंस कौन करता है, आर०बी०आई० आई० डी० बी० आई० ए०, आई० सी० आई० सी० आई० क्यों पैसा देता है। आप यह भी पूछिये। गुजराल साहब को यह समझना चाहिये और कम से कम यह सोचना चाहिये कि हमारे देश की एक कम्पनी है जो इंटरनेशनल स्टेंडर्ड की गाड़ी बना रही है। उन्होंने नयी गाड़ी लांच की है, उसका उद्घाटन किया है। इसके लिए हमें गोरवान्वित महसूस करना चाहिये न कि हमें उस पर क्रिटिसिज्म करना चाहिये। वहां पर क्या चर्चा हुई, गुजराल साहब खुद मंत्री रह चुके हैं, बहुत सारे उद्घाटन समारोह में जा चुके हैं। उद्घाटन समारोह में सिवाय फीता काटने के और क्या चर्चा होती है उनको खुद मालूम है। इसके बावजूद भी पूछ रहे हैं कि क्या

क्या चर्चा हुई। दुर्भाग्य है इस देश का। (व्यवधान)

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY (Andhra Pradesh): It is a slip. It should have been avoided.

श्री इन्द्र कुमार गुजराल : अहलुवालिया जी मेरे दोस्त भी हैं, मेरे मित्र भी हैं, मैं उनकी इज्जत करता हूं एग्जीबीशन का इनआगुरेशन कीजिये, मुझे कोई एतराज नहीं है लेकिन अगर किसी एग्जीबीशन का एनआगुरेशन प्राइम मिनिस्टर हाऊस में हो तो उसकी रूप रेखा थोड़ी बदल जाती है और खास कर के इन तस्वीरों में जिन लोगों की तस्वीरें प्राइम मिनिस्टर के साथ दिखाई गई हैं उनके मुताबिक यहां पर बहस हो चुकी है। मैं उस पर फर्दर बहस नहीं करूंगा। मैं प्राइम मिनिस्टर साहब की इज्जत करता हूं। मैं प्राइम मिनिस्टर के ऊपर कोई दोष नहीं डाल रहा हूं। मैं सिर्फ यह कह रहा हूं...(व्यवधान) कि दो बातों के मुताल्लिक यहां बात साफ होनी चाहिए कि इन लोगों को इजाजत कैसे दी गयी? किन लोगों ने किस तरीके से प्राइम मिनिस्टर को एप्रोच किया और अगर प्राइम मिनिस्टर इनसे मिले तो प्राइम मिनिस्टर ने इनसे पूछा कि क्या उन्होंने जो चिट्ठी सोलंकी जी को दी थी उसमें क्या लिखा था?

SHRI MD. SALIM (West Bengal): Madam, I think Chandigarh is still a Union Territory, it has not been handed over either to Punjab or Haryana, the dispute is still there, but Haryana police is playing havoc in Chandigarh. They are running a parallel Government at the station. They are raiding houses and arresting the employees who are now on strike. Haryana Government employees of education, transport, irrigation, electricity, health and various other departments are on strike. Haryana University employees and the employees of semi-Government and Government departments, particularly of the transport department, are on strike. Haryana police has unleashed a reign of terror, arresting the employees, their family members and relatives under ESMA. Even some of the members belonging to my organisation, youth organisation, who are expressing solidarity with those employees, are being arrested and harassed. We have the experience of the then BJP Government in Himachal Pradesh. Even the Congress people, including the Prime Minister, criticised the role of Himachal Pradesh Government. The Congress tried to capitalise on the sympathy of the employees and other sections of the people because the BJP Government also repressed and suppressed the employees movement. Now, not only in Chandigarh, in entire Haryana an undeclared emergency situation is there. Police has resorted to lathicharge. They are following terrorising tactics to bemoan the strikers. They are arresting the Central Government employees at the railway station itself thought they are travelling with a valid ticket. The employees who were launching the 'jail bharo' movement during the last week of November and first week of December, were travelling with a valid ticket. They were coming from different parts of the country to Chandigarh and the Haryana police forcibly brought them down and arrested. They were travelling with a valid railway ticket. The joint action committee sent telegrams to the Railway Ministry, but the Railway Ministry is not doing anything because Bhajan Lal is the Chief Minister there, who can do anything, who can bring back the days of emergency.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What are you talking about? Is the strike of the State Government employees or of the Central Government employees?

SHRI MD. SALIM: State Government employees.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Then it should be raised at the State level.

SHRI MD. SALIM: Madam, we are questioning the right of the employees who are travelling with a valid ticket. They are being arrested, their family members are being arrested. They can-

not do this. I am raising a basic question. Who has given the right to Haryana police to arrest those persons who are travelling with a valid railway ticket?

श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी (पश्चिम बंगाल) : मैडम, यह सिर्फ राज्य कर्मचारियों का सवाल नहीं है। मैडम, हमारे देश में जनतांत्रिक व्यवस्था है और जनतांत्रिक व्यवस्था के तहत हड़ताल करना न्यायोचित कदम माना जाता है। गैर-काननी नहीं है। ये जो कर्मचारी हड़ताल कर रहे हैं उनमें हजारों-लाखों की संख्या में महिलाएं हैं और उन महिलाओं को घरों में जाकर किस तरह से उनको टेरोराइज किया गया, आतंकित किया गया... **(व्यवधान)** महिलाओं और बच्चों को घरों से निकालकर "एसमा" के तहत गिरफ्तार किया गया। इतनी खराब हालत जनतांत्रिक व्यवस्था में क्या हड़ताली कर्मचारियों के साथ... **(व्यवधान)** होती है जिसमें महिला कर्मचारी भी हैं। जो कर्मचारी नहीं भी हैं सिर्फ घरों में बैठे हुए हैं उनको घर से निकालकर "एसमा" के तहत गिरफ्तार किया गया... **(व्यवधान)**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): No children have been arrested anywhere. Please do not make such a statement.

श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी : हजारों महिलाओं को "एसमा" के अंतर्गत गिरफ्तार किया गया है... **(व्यवधान)**

SHRI MD. SALIM: Students were arrested.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Does the Minister deny that there has been no repression, that the charge being made here in this House is totally baseless? Let her deny.

SHRIMATI MARGRET ALVA: I went to say that breaking the strike by the State Government is a different question. But to say that children ace being arrested from homes and taken to jail is not correct.... *(Interruptions)*...

श्री मोहम्मद सलीम : अच्छा हुआ मंत्री जी उठीं तो। ... **(व्यवधान)**

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: How can she make a statement without having ascertained the facts? Let the hon. Minister tell the House what the source is... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: My information is that children are not being arrested.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: How do you know?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: I know... *(Interruptions)*...

श्री एस. एस. अहलुवालिया : महोदया, एक तरफ तो महिलाएं पूरे अधिकार मांगती हैं कि उन्हें पुरुषों के बराबर अधिकार मिलने चाहिएं, पर जो कर्मचारी महिलाएं हैं वे अगर हड़ताल पर जाती हैं और हड़ताली कर्मचारी महिलाएं अगर गिरफ्तार होती हैं तो उस पर कोई रोक नहीं होनी चाहिए, क्योंकि वे हड़ताल पर हैं। ... **(व्यवधान)**

श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी : सवाल यह नहीं है, महिलाओं को... **(व्यवधान)**

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question is not that... *(Interruptions)*... Please sit down. It is totally confusing... *(Interruptions)*... Please sit down. There is a confusion about it. What I heard is, she said—and what they had written to us—that the wives of the striking em and harassed. It is wrong—that is what they are saying.. Not those employee-women. If the women go on strike as employees, they should be treated the way)the Government wants.

SHRI GURUDAS GUPTA: Let the hon. Minister of Home deny that the wives of the striking employees have been put to atrocities.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That's the question they are putting.

श्रीमती सरला महेश्वरी : हड़ताली कर्मचारियों से निबटने का यह कौन सा तरीका है ?

SHRI MD. SALIM: Who has given them this authority? You should take the lession from Himachal Pradesh. The BJP Government there did the same thing and the Prime Minister went their to condemn it.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: The BJP Government of Himachal Pradesh and the Congress Government of Haryana are on the same footing. It goes to your credit also.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now let me call someone else. That matter is over.

श्री मोहम्मद सलीम : मैडम, आपसे हरियाणा के लोग यह मांग करते हैं कि पंजाब और हिमाचल प्रदेश से पैरिटी होनी चाहिए उनके पे-स्केल्ज़ में और इसमें गलती क्या है ?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Paswan.

SHRI N. E. BALARAM (Kerala): Madam...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You want to speak on the same thing?

SHRI N. E. BALARAM: One point. Madam, this is a State subject—I know it very well. The strike is going on.

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Madam...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You have already sponken. Mr. Ahluwalia. You can't speak on every subject. I have a list of 12 Special Mentions. Mr. Balaram wants to explain.

SHRI N. E. BALARAM: Madam, I am only associating and saying one point. It is a State subject—I know that. I am not asking the Central Government... to intervene. That is not my point. I totally condemn what is going on in Haryana. That is a different point. More than 10,000 people have been arrested and many are dismissed, but that is not my point. But even passengers travelling in trains—I am emphatic: passengecs travelling in trains—are harassed by the Haryana police. They have no right to do that. Many people came and told me. And they are not on strike. They are only travelling through Haryana. How could they arrest ordinary passengers? This is a matter the Central Government has to look into. Things have come to such a pass. This is a totally condemnable thing. This point I want to bring to the notice of the Government.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He is absolutely correct. Now Mr. Paswan.

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Madam, I want to associate with this..

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You dissociate, you associate. I don't know what you really want to do? Just now you were defending the Haryana Government... (*Interruptions*)...

श्री एस. एस. अहलुवालिया : महोदया, मैं यही कहना चाहता हूं कि अगर यह मसला परिवार के सदस्यों का है तो जो भी हरियाणा की पुलिस ने किया है उसकी भर्त्सना करनी चाहिए अगर हड़ताली कर्मचारी महिला हों, पुलिस हो, अगर उसके खिलाफ कोई कार्यवाही होती है तो वह अपनी कारगुजारी कर रहे हैं। महोदया, मैं इस के साथ-साथ यह कहना चाहता हूं कि यह एक बड़ी लंबी बात है। 12 जून, 1992 में इन कर्मचारियों का फैसला हो चुका है। सिर्फ डेढ़ प्रतिशत हरियाणा में सरकारी कर्मचारी हैं और उनको बजट का 56 प्रतिशत जाता है। .. (**व्यवधान**)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We are not discussing that. I won't permit it, I am sorry. I am not allowing it... (*Interruptions*)... See, if I allow the State subject, whether it is right or wrong, whatever they are doing, we will open a flood.

[The Deputy Chairman]

gate. I cannot permit the State Government spokesman to come and speak here for them. When I allowed it, it was because the allegation was made that the wives of the employees were being harassed which was wrong. If the employees who are working, are agitating, they should be dealt with according to whatever laws, rules and regulations are there but not their families. That is the limited issue. That is all.

RE: DEMAND FOR SEEDS FERTILIZERS AND MEDICINES FOR THE CROP OF RABI IN BIHAR

श्री ब्रह्मदेव आनन्द पासवान (बिहार) : उपसभापति महोदया, मेरा सवाल अन्न से जुड़ा है और वर्तमान समय रबी की फसल बोने का मध्य सीजन है। महोदया, आप जानती हैं कि उत्तरी बिहार में केवल नदियों की बाढ़ है और दक्षिणी बिहार में सुखाड़ है और यही हमारा बिहार है। इस बिहार में अभी रबी की फसल बोने का वक्त है, लेकिन भारत सरकार द्वारा वहां न दवा, नवीज और न ही खाद दी गयी है जिसके चलते पूरे बिहार में रबी की फसल बोने के लिए हाहाकार मचा हुआ है। महोदया, आप जानती हैं कि हमारे बिहार में मात्र 11 प्रतिशत ही जमीन सिंचाई योग्य है जबकि पंजाब में 92 प्रतिशत है और बिहार के किसान मजदूर पंजाब, हरियाणा और सभी जगहों पर काम करते हैं, लेकिन आज वहां सारे मजदूर अपने खेत बोने के लिए वहां पहुंचे हुए हैं पर न उनको बीज मिल रहा है, न खाद मिल रही है और न दवा मिल रही है जिस कारण हाहाकार मचा हुआ है।

महोदया, मैं आपके माध्यम से भारत सरकार से मांग करता हूं कि बिहार में अविलम्ब खाद, बीज और दवा की आपूर्ति की जाए क्योंकि रबी की फसल जोकि अन्न है और अन्न ही अनन्त है, अन्न से ही आनन्द है और यह अन्न जोकि हमारी राष्ट्रीय संपत्ति है, उसे बचाया जा सके।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Chimanbhai Haribhai Shukla, Shri Parmeshwar Kumar Agarwalla, Shri Suresh Pachouri, Shri Vishnu Kant Shastri, Shri Kailash Narain Sarang, Dr. Bapu Kaldate, Shri Gaya Singh and Shri Chimanbhai Mehta not present.

SPECIAL MENTIONS

Fall in price of natural rubber

SHRI RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI (Kerala): Madam, I would like to bring to the notice of the Government the sad plight of the 8 lakh rubber growers in Kerala.

The price of natural rubber has fallen down considerably. Eighty-five per cent of the area and eithy-three per cent of the production are accounted for by the small producers. They do not have the resources to keep the crop for long. The present bench-mark price was fixed in January, 1993 by taking into consideration the cost of production in 1990-91. Since then the cost of production has gone up considerably. The wage rate was also increased by about 30 per cent during this period. If the present situation is allowed to continue, that will adversely affect the interests of the small rubber producers.

Hence, through you, Madam, I request the Goverenment of India to announce a revised bench-mark price and take all necessary measures to procure rubber immediately.

Need to check wastage of Railway property at Gangapur city Railway Station

श्री मूलचन्द मीणा (राजस्थान) : उपसभापति महोदया, मैंने पहले भी स्पेशल मेंशन के माध्यम से इस सदन के अन्दर करीब दो-तीन बार गंगापुर सिटी रेलवे स्टेशन की दुर्दशा के संबंध में अपने विचार रखे हैं और रेलवे मंत्री जी का ध्यान भी आकर्षित किया है, लेकिन कोई कारण मेरी समझ में नहीं